

UNIT 5 Writing: Taking patient history

Reading: Patient history

1. Read the text and answer the questions:

Patient: Juan García, 45 years old

Medical history: Juan García has come to the pharmacy complaining of chest pain.

The pain started two days ago while he was resting at home. It began suddenly and has continued since then. He describes the pain as a tight, pressing sensation in the center of his chest. The pain sometimes moves to his left shoulder and arm. He has also experienced shortness of breath and felt dizzy since the pain began. However, he hasn't had any nausea or vomiting. The pain has been constant for the past two days, but it becomes worse when he walks or climbs stairs. It improves slightly when he rests. He rates the pain as 8 out of 10 in intensity.

Juan has already taken paracetamol, but it hasn't helped. He has never had this type of pain before.

I have checked both his blood pressure, which was 145/90 mmHg and his heart rate, which was 102 bpm.

Rx: Due to the severity of the symptoms, I have advised him to seek immediate medical attention. I have prescribed him aspirin and recommended that he rest and avoid physical activity until he is evaluated by a doctor.

True or False

- The pain started while the patient was exercising. _____
- The pain has moved to another part of the body. _____
- The patient has had difficulty breathing and mild sweat. _____
- The patient has experienced nausea. _____
- The pain improves with rest. _____
- The patient has had this pain before. _____

2. Have you heard about the SOCRATES method of taking patient history? Match each of the words to its meaning to find out more about it.

Site	Information about specific qualities of the symptom. (<i>What is it like?</i>)
Onset	Location of the symptom. (<i>Where is the pain?</i>)
Character	How the symptom has changed overtime. (<i>How long has the patient been feeling the pain?</i>)
Radiation	Ask if the symptom moves anywhere else in the body. (<i>Does it move?</i>)
Associated Symptoms	How and when the symptoms started and developed. (<i>When did it start?</i>)
Timing	How serious are the symptoms from 1-10.
Exacerbating and relieving factors	Ask if anything makes the symptoms worse or better.
Severity	Ask if there are any other symptoms linked to the main symptoms.

3. Now that you know them, find information in the text that match each of the elements of the SOCRATES method.

Site	Center of chest.
Onset	
Character	
Radiation	
Associated Symptoms	
Timing	
Exacerbating and relieving factors	
Severity	

Writing: Patient history

4. Look at the patient's case notes, choose one and write the patient's medical history (120-150 words).

Patient case notes A – Abdominal pain

Site	Lower right abdomen
Onset	Started yesterday evening (suddenly)
Character	Sharp, stabbing pain
Radiation	Does not move
Associated symptoms	Fever, nausea
Timing	Constant since it started
Exacerbating/Relieving	Worse when walking or coughing, better when lying down
Severity	7/10

Additional info:

- Has taken ibuprofen → no improvement yet
- Temperature: 38.3°C
- Has not eaten much since yesterday

Patient case notes B – Respiratory problems

Site	Chest/ throat
Onset	Started three days ago (gradually)
Character	Dry cough, sore throat
Radiation	Sometimes moves to the neck
Associated symptoms	Mild fever, fatigue, headache
Timing	Symptoms have been present for three days
Exacerbating/Relieving	Worse at night, better with warm drinks
Severity	5/10

Additional info:

- Has already taken cough syrup → slight improvement
- Temperature: 37.8°C
- Has had similar symptoms before (last winter)

△ INCLUDE:

- Present perfect (since, for, already, yet) and past simple
- Clear paragraph structure like in the model
- A final sentence with a **recommendation and/or prescription**. (e.g., "I have prescribed...", "I have advised the patient to...")

SENTENCE STARTERS

- "The patient has come to the pharmacy complaining of..."
- "The pain started..."
- "It is located in..."
- "The patient has had..."
- "The pain has been..."
- "It becomes worse when..."
- "They have already taken..."